

Ironwomen prove their mettle in Arizona

By Kathryn Reed

It wasn't about setting records " though others did that. This particular Sunday was about personal achievement.

Sisters Rene Brejc, 45, of Christmas Valley and Martine Milton, 46, of Reno completed the Ford Ironman Arizona in Tempe.



Martine Milton and Rene Brejc with finisher medals from their first Ironman.

Photo/Provided

"Because it was my first Ironman my goal was to finish," Brejc said. The course is closed after 17 hours.

Brejc finished the mega triathlon in 14 hours, 27 minutes. Her sister, who had to stop for two hours because of dehydration, crossed the finish line after a little more than 16 hours.

They didn't care that the finishers had broken course records and were probably at home showered and relaxing while they still swam, cycled and ran. Neither of the winners had to

contend with a broken bone.

Brejc broke one of her little toes 10 days before the Nov. 22 race so she didn't run during that time. Her doctor told her she wouldn't make it any worse by participating in the tri; it would just test her pain tolerance.

"I cut a hole in the shoe where the pinky toe is so I was able to run," Brejc said.

Training began a year ago. An uncle who was 50 when he did his first Ironman inspired her to begin her quest.

"I would say the other big thing for me is I have a 9 and 12 year old. For my kids I wanted to show them if you put your mind to something that seems really hard, you can make it happen," Brejc said.

They were on-hand to watch their mom compete, as were Brejc's husband and parents. Brejc said the Tempe Ironman is great for spectators because the cycling and running events are multiple loops.

Last summer she participated in the Donner triathlon as part of her training.

"I had never swam with a bunch of people in wetsuits. I kind of freaked out," Brejc said of the North Shore event. "I knew I had to overcome being able to swim in green mucky water with 2,400 people."

She said that was the biggest obstacle she had to overcome "feeling a bit claustrophobic in the water."

In the winter months training involved skate skiing and back country skiing. Much of her swimming was done at the South Lake Tahoe recreation complex. In the summer she was in Lake Tahoe off Baldwin Beach.

After the Arizona event she said that one Ironman was enough.

Ten days later and she is talking about doing an Ironman in Idaho in 2011.

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